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were extremely well performed. I doubt much, however, whether it be an improvement to adopt Haydn's style in the accompaniments to Handel's recitatives—I mean striking the chords à la harpe.

The chorus "*Glory to God*" was admirably executed, Mr. W. Robinson sings the bass solos "*Behold darkness*," and "*the people that walked*," with great spirit and good taste. His upper notes are very much improved. Mozart's accompaniment was well executed by the organist, Mr. J. Robinson; but Handel alone was fit to compose accompaniments to his own songs. The noble chorus "*For unto us a child is born*" followed Mr. Robinson's solo. Both the vocal and instrumental parts were excellently given.

We must defer all notice of the "dim religious light" illuming the gothic arches and the arms and banners of the knights, and all the other concurring circumstances which contribute to produce a powerful impression on the mind, and render it more susceptible to the influence of music in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, and pass at once to Westminster Abbey, where also "one of us" was spending his Christmas.

#### "ONE OF US" IN LONDON.

LONDON is so huge a place, that there are generally two or three different sorts of weather in it at the same time. Down in the thick of the city, Christmas day was a bitter black stern-looking day, varied only by occasional drifting showers of snow, borne on a piercing blast from the north-east. But in the Regent's Park, it was *toute autre chose*. The morning was absolutely beautiful; the crisp and clean snow, glanced on the bright beams of the sun, and the brisk sharp breeze that swept over the wide expanse of the Park, carried along with it the lighter particles of the snow which looked like a little diamondy shower as it was borne on the wind. Then, in the distance, the rising grounds of Highgate and Hampstead, with their villas and snow-powdered trees, had a certain cockney nobleness of aspect, glowing as they were in the morning light.

There has been a beautiful new Church built in the Regent's Park; the simple yet elegant architecture of which, is a very pleasing proof that genuine good taste in this kind of building has not *entirely* passed away from us, notwithstanding, the vulgar specimens of utter tastelessness displayed in most of the edifices which the commissioners for building new churches have caused to be erected, for the good of religion, and the disgrace of our architectural reputation.

Here, there were excellent prayers, at which no body knelt, and the people were dismissed without a sermon, *contra morem hibernicum*. When three o'clock came, I found myself from habit, being an old Saint Patrick's going man, on my way to Westminster Abbey to hear evening service. How different was the present scene from my old recollections. Instead of hurrying through mean and dirty streets, observing before and behind and on either side of me, groups of people eagerly pressing forward to be in time to get standing room where they might listen to the sublime and delightful music of Saint Patrick's, I found myself in the wide and noble street of Whitehall, surrounded by the public buildings of the greatest city in the world.

Here there was no crowd, no hurry—all was

cold and spacious, silent and frosty. I proceeded down Parliament-street, and as I reached the end of it, where the full view of the western end of the Abbey appears before one, I paused to gaze in silent admiration upon the venerable building. It is, indeed, extremely beautiful. The declining but ruddy rays of a wintry sun, beamed full upon those towers of such admirable proportion, which flank the western entrance, and not even the keen feel of the sharp frosty air, could dissipate the soft and tranquillizing effect which the sight of such architectural harmony produces upon the mind. The crimson beam of a December sun, seemed, as it rested upon these towers, to have all the mellowness of the evening tints of autumn.

The parish Church of Saint Margaret's, which is a common-place ugly thing without, but a very handsome church within, is horribly in the way, in the place where it stands. It obstructs the view of the eastern end of the Abbey exceedingly, and with all deference to the worthy parishioners, I wish it were blown up, if it could be done without injury to the noble building which stands so near.

I entered the abbey by poets' corner, the narrowest and meanest of all the entrances, but the only one which, according to the tasteful arrangements of those who manage the concerns of the abbey, is left open. I went in absolutely alone, and was immediately asked by a gowned menial, "did I want a seat," meaning thereby, did I propose to pay a shilling for one; to which having responded in the affirmative, I was soon seated in the great chapel, of the exquisite beauty of which, I feel myself utterly unable to give anything like an adequate idea. It occupies the eastern end of the principal aisle, or stem of the cross, in which form the abbey is built, and is separated from the open space by a screen of oak, which is not sufficiently lofty to admit of a gallery, except at the western extremity, where the organ is placed; but to the eye, this gallery even, seems almost on the ground, so insignificant is its height, compared with that of the gilded arches of grey stone, which form the roof, far far in the lofty distance above it.

The effect of this arrangement is, that the sound of speaking or of singing, no sooner rises above the height of the screen, than it is dissipated into the vast area of the abbey, and nothing short of immense power, would produce any thing like important effect. But the power of sound employed is very very far inferior to that in Saint Patrick's. The organ is not nearly so large, nor so loud, and its effect is absolutely pitiful in so vast a place. How gloriously would the trumpet notes of Saint Patrick's organ have echoed there—how would the sound have climbed along the lofty slender stems, and arches rising over arches, and at last have died away, lingering amid the remote and elaborate tracery of that cold grey stone!

But all in Westminster Abbey is cold and wretched; there is no force, no heart in it: no crowd—no eagerness—no panting expectation; no galleries beaming with all but seraphic beauty—no music worth being listened to—nothing but beggarly economy, and cold despatch, in one of the noblest temples ever dedicated by man to God. Two or three paltry chandeliers suspended from the lofty roof, were filled with about a dozen nasty small yellow dipped candles, while a bunch of holly tied around the stalk of each chandelier, looked in such com-

pany, like a bunch of greens stuck up in a green-grocer's shop. The desks at which the choir sat, were lighted, or rather darkness was made visible around them, by little bits of tall and wick, not thicker than a common wax taper, and to which, farthing rush-lights would have been absolute magnificence. They attempted to sing, "*Comfort ye my people*," with the air of "*Every Valley*," and the hallelujah chorus. Ashes of Spray! what a falling off, from what I had been accustomed to. The commencement of the anthem was correctly sung, but with very little force or expression; towards the conclusion of the recitative, however, the singer's voice broke in pieces, and the flaws wandered away God knows where, certainly not in the track of Handel's music.

A young boy went through the air of "*Every Valley*," he sung, or tried to sing, after such a fashion as we might expect from a boy performing a school lesson, who knew that plumb-pudding was to be eaten, as soon as the lesson was done. But the most miserable thing of all, was the chorus. Good heaven! what might not the hallelujah chorus be in Westminster Abbey! and what a poor childish screaming performance it was. Figure to yourself, gentle reader, half a dozen persons with military fifes, playing the hallelujah chorus, under Dean Swift's monument in Saint Patrick's aisle, and you may have some notion of what it was.

The place was miserably cold; there was no sermon—I was glad of it—I was glad to get away from a place where all was paltry except the building, and the design for which we were gathered together.

When the service was done, we were turned out—literally *turned out*! and hurried along past the splendid monuments erected to the mighty dead, by the *urging voice* of a scoundrel sexton, who feared that if the congregation were suffered to delay in going out, long enough to see the monuments, there might be fewer sixpences taken at the door next day!

As I came out, the snow pelted bitterly in my teeth: welcome snow—welcome bitter cold—welcome anything—to escape from the contemplation of disgusting, degrading, low and vulgar menial covetousness, in that glorious pile—the great, the noble, the far-renowned Westminster Abbey!

#### THE DRAMA.

MASSANIELLO has been the principal object of attraction at our theatre lately. The music, though superior to most of the productions of the French school, and far above the fade frippery and affected pathos with which Boeldieu overloads his composition, is not altogether free from plagiarism, it is doubtless fair enough to steal from the Italians when illustrating a portion of their history, and we can see no objection to the Barcarole being a genuine one, as well as the real offspring of M. Auber's mind; yet must we positively pronounce against the injustice of robbing us of one of the few melodies we can call our own, and we are ready to swear to our property in the "*Market Chorus*" of the Opera, which we at once identified as the air of Caleb Quotem.

The overture is a solecism in musical composition, being more of the nature of a *Fantasia*, in which the songs of the Piece form the principal themes. The Barcarole is indeed beautiful, and nothing can exceed the fine effect of

the chorus breaking in, ever and anon, upon the melody, except perhaps the thrilling sensation communicated by the *sotto voce* "whisper now," in which Braham is so effective; the chorusses are fine throughout, and partake much of the German school, indeed there are evident traces of Weber in many parts of the opera. In the last scene the Author presents us with a melange of the various airs throughout the piece, and the beautiful transitions from the Allegro to the Penseroso, are managed with a skill that would do credit to Rossini, master, as he undoubtedly is, of the crescendo style.

Our limits will not permit us to dwell upon the manner in which the opera was represented here; we shall merely remark that Braham does ample justice to all his songs, and to our taste he sings the Barcarole better than we have heard it, either in France or Germany—(Italy does not patronize French music,) and in return for the great pleasure he afforded us, we cannot better express our gratitude than by entreating the manager, not to peril his life, or even scare his nerves, by that ill-timed excursion on horseback, with which one scene is concluded; the other performers were respectable in the various parts allotted to them—yet we may suggest to Mr. Brough, that a fisherman is not necessarily a bandit, and need not *ex officio* look like a cut-throat. There are some curtains, and one chorus has been entirely omitted.

The scenery deserves our most unqualified admiration, and though it is difficult to particularize where all is good, yet we would recommend to the especial notice of our play-going friends, the view of the Market-Place, and also that of the Bay of Naples, in which the effect of interminable distance is so powerfully combined with the apparent haze of an Italian noon.

## FINE ARTS.

### THE DEAD CHRIST.

WE have in preparation an article upon the past and present state of the Fine Arts in Ireland, which we shall introduce to our readers in our second number; for the present we must limit ourselves to a brief notice of the statue now exhibiting at the Royal Irish Institution. "Christ taken from the Cross," executed in marble by Mr. Hogan, a Cork artist. It has attracted much and deserved attention, and the artist has been honoured with a gold medal by the Dublin Society. It is indeed a beautiful statue. The death-like repose of the whole figure is peaceful yet awful. The head, hands and arms recline in powerless rigidity, conveying at once to the mind the expression of death, with a fidelity we have rarely seen imparted to stone. Were they severed from the body, and laid in a place by themselves, one would still perceive, at a glance, that they belonged to the figure of a corpse. The right leg and foot are stretched together by the peculiar recumbent posture of the body, into that continuous stiffness, which, while it displays the varied talent of the artist, is still strikingly true to nature. The face (though deficient in Grecian delicacy and intellectual character, especially about the nose,) is, in other respects, highly expressive; dignity, sweetness, and the last traits of the agony of the cross, are blended with considerable skill.

There is even depicted in the suffering lineaments, particularly about the mouth, an expression of rapture as if in conscious triumph over the grave. The shape of the breast, and the sunken position of the entire frame, display a master's hand, and speak volumes for the artist's powers of observation and composition. Indeed the anatomy of the figure seemed to us, throughout, remarkably perfect; every muscle is a study. From the sunken and death-like features, and the exquisite yet truly natural expression of the mouth, it may well be seen that the artist is one

— "Who hath bent him o'er the dead  
Ere the first day of death is fled,

\* \* \*  
Before decay's effacing fingers  
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers,  
And marked the mild and placid air,  
The rapture of repose that's there."

The hair flows down in a very graceful manner; it is however in the Italian stony style, and not like the rich natural hair of Chantry and our best British sculptors.

There is also lying for public inspection a Fawn, by the same artist, cast in plaster from a model executed by him in Rome. This is a highly wrought representation of nature in its picturesque mythological garb, under the influence of intoxication. The Fawn has staggered and fallen over his empty urn, he still endeavours to rise and to support himself on his left hand, while his right yet grasps convulsively the darling cup, and every vein that swells on the surface of both, proclaims how his blood is careering through its channels, under the influence of the potent libations which he has been quaffing in honour of plump Bacchus with pink eyne, whose emblems wreath his urn. The countenance is truly voluptuous, and the head presents a fine illustration of the natural expression of the phrenological feature "Gustativeness." We do not know if Mr. Hogan intended this, but the effect is happy and highly characteristic.

We had written a charming critique, but somewhat lengthy, picking divers holes in both the statue and the cast, and pointing out how Mr. Hogan may attain a more graceful general outline, and more Grecian elegance and lightness in his next statue, but in this, as in fifty other capital articles omitted or curtailed, our 'very exquisite fooling' is cheated of its fair proportions by the dingy demon of the printing office crying "hold enough."

## ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

### LETTERS FROM EDINBURGH.

No. 1.

Edinburgh, December 28th, 1829.

EDINBURGH is not quite so full at this moment, as it was a fortnight since, and will be again a week hence. During the Christmas holidays our courts of law do not meet, and the consequence is, that many of our advocates and writers to the signet—an important part of the population in Edinburgh—betake themselves to country stations where they are sure of plump goose and luscious turkey. The young gentlemen of the University avail themselves of a similar opportunity, and rattle away in the stage coach to astonish and delight their country cousins. You are of course aware, that we presbyterians, do not attach any importance to Christmas in a religious point of view, and the only use to which we turn the

day, is to make it the occasion of eating one of the very best dinners we can possibly get, and of drinking a proportionate number of bumpers to the health of all our friends and relations, down to cousins seventeen times removed.

On the whole, Edinburgh is tolerably brisk this season. Last winter was terribly dull, but there are better hopes of this. You will be surprised, however, to learn that the only place of public amusement we have, is the Theatre Royal. The minor theatre is closed, and there is not a single exhibition of any kind where one can loiter away an evening hour. Nor is the theatre, after all, very well attended. Miss Paton, who was here about six weeks ago, drew splendid houses; but Macready, Miss Smithson, and the regular company have performed since to but indifferent audiences. Sir Walter Scott's tragedy called, "The House of Aspen," which appears in the "*Keepsake*," was produced about a week ago in very excellent style; but it is a heavy acting play, and though it has been repeated every night since, it does not draw houses. A pantomime is in preparation, which will no doubt induce all the good papas and mammas, to make their small but numerous families happy for one evening. Our other gaieties in prospect, are four subscription concerts, given annually, by the society of professional musicians: the public assemblies, of which there are also four, and to which will probably be added a fancy ball. The theatrical fund dinner, which is fixed for the 29th of January, the second that has taken place in Edinburgh, is rendered memorable by the fact, that at the first meeting (in 1827) of the members and patrons of the association, Sir Walter Scott, who was in the chair, publicly confessed himself the author of all the Waverley novels. In addition to these amusements, we shall of course be visited by a few lions, who will afford materials for the gossip of a day.

In the literary world, I am not aware that there is anything very remarkable stirring. Our periodical literature seems to be flourishing, although, as you know, our great Aristarchus—Francis Jeffrey, has retired from the labour of editing the *Edinburgh Review*, and the task has now devolved upon Mr. Macvey Napier. Besides Blackwood, which every body knows and reads, we have another magazine, called *The New Scots Magazine*, which is edited by Mr. Peterkin. We have also a *Literary Journal*, which has got into very extensive circulation, as it is to be hoped your *Dublin Literary Gazette* will do; and Dr. Browne, formerly Editor of the *Caledonian Mercury*, announces, that in addition to the eight newspapers we already possess, he is about to establish a ninth—called *The North Briton*. The Edinburgh newspapers are all respectable, and are on a much better footing, I believe, than is general elsewhere. An action of damages against an Edinburgh paper is quite a rarity. While talking of our periodical literature, I must not of course omit to mention *Constable's Miscellany*, the father of all the *Family Libraries* and *Pocket Cyclopedias* now in existence. Notwithstanding the number of rivals that have started up, it still keeps its ground, and I believe pays well. The proprietors are about to publish "A History of Chivalry and the Crusades," which I believe will be found an interesting work; and they have also in preparation a "History of the Knights of Malta,"—a "History of Music,